

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, TU

SUBJECT: JUSTICE PARTY HOLDS MASS RALLY IN ISTANBUL

SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF OCT. 9 JUSTICE PARTY (JP) ELECTION RALLY WAS TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR EX-GEN. FAIK TURUN, JP'S CANDIDATE FOR SINGLE VACANT SENATE SEAT, EVENT PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR PRIMIN DEMIREL AND HOST OF LUMINARIES TO CRITICIZE REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (RPP) LEADER ECEVIT. DEMIREL EMPLHASIZED THAT JP TRUE HEIR OF MENDERES DEMOCRAT PARTY AND SOUGHT TO DISASSOCIATE "NEW RPP" FROM PARTY FOUNDED BY ATATURK. DESPITE MINOR DISRUPTION, RALLY - WHICH WAS BETTER ATTENDED THAN ON HELD FOR 1973 ELECTION--PASSED WITHOUT SERIOUS INCIDENT. END SUMMARY

1. IN WIND-UP OF CAMPAIGN FOR OCT. 12 PARTIAL SENATE ELECTION, JP STAGED MAS "MEETING" IN ISTANBUL'S TAKSIM SQUARE, TRADITIONAL CULMINATION POINT OF TURKISH POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS. WHILE OSTANSIBLE PURPOSE OF RALLY WAS TO PROMOTE CANDIDACY OF FORMER GEN. FAIK TURUN, SPEAKERS USED OCCUASION TO ATTACK REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY LEADER ECEVIT IN HARSH TERMS.

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2. MAIN SPEAKERS WERE GEN. TURUN, MUTLU MENDERES, DEPUTY

PRIMIN, AND REPUBLICAN RELIANCE PARTY (RRP) LEADER TURHAN FEYZIOGLU. FEYZIOGLU, WHOSE PRESENCE ON PODIUM WAS SURPRISE, ANNOUNCED RRP'S DECISION TO SUPPORT GEN. TURUN, WHO AS TRUE PATRIOT AND AS ISTANBUL MARTIAL LAW COMMANDER DURING WORST PERIOD OF 1971-73 "ANARCHISM", HAD CRUSHED COMMUNISM AND EXTREME LEFT. FEYZIOGLU'S SPEECH WAS MOST VICIOUS ATTACK OF ALL ON RPP, SINGLING OUT ECEVIT FOR UNUSUAL PERSONAL ABUSE. TURUN, WHO SEEMS NOT TO HAVE MADE TRANSITION FROM MILITARY OFFICER TO POLITICIAN

, GAVE SPEECH ESSENTIALLY DEFENDING HIS MARTIAL LAW ROLE AND PRAISING TURKISH MILITARY. MENDERES SPOKE OF JP AS EXTENSION OF HIS FATHER'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP) IN KEEPING WITH BANNER PROCLAIMING "THE THREE GREAT LEADERS, BAYAR, MENDERES, DEMIREL". BAYAR'S DAUGHTER NILUFER GURSOY WAS ALSO INTRODUCED TO UNDERSCORE LINK WITH OLD DP. OTHER NOTABLES WHO APPEARED ON PLATFORM WERE FONMIN IHSAN SABRI CAGLAYANCIL, IN HIS CAPACITY AS BURSA SENATOR; ISTANBUL SENATOR ISMAIL HAKKI TEKINEL, MIN. OF STATE IN TALU GOVT., AND DEPUTIES FOR IZMIR AND MANISA.

4. ALTHOUGH DEMIREL OFFERED POSITIVE PROMISES SUCH AS A SECOND BOSPHORUS BRIDGE AND COLOR TV FOR TURKEY, HIS SPEECH CONSISTED PRIMARILY OF ATTACK ON RPP FOR BRINGING HIGH PRICES AND SHORTAGES TO "PEOPLE" (HALK) IT CLAIMED TO SERVE, AND FOR EXPOSING TURKEY TO DANGER OF COMMUNIST TAKEOVER. WHILE PLAYING DOWN CRITICISM OF ECEVIT AS INDIVIDUAL DEMIREL HIT RPP HARD AS PARTY WHICH OPENED WAY TO EXTREME LEFT, NOTING THERE WAS NO INDICATION OF HOW FAR IT WOULD GO. DEMIREL COMPARED POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES OF NATIONALIST FRONT PARTIES WITH SUPPORTERS OF RPP (I.E. TURKISH SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY, TURKISH LABOR PARTY, ETC.) MANY OF WHOSE LEADERS HAD BEEN IMPRISONED AS COMMUNISTS. AT ONE POINT, WHEN DEMIREL'S TALK INTERRUPTED BY RPP DEMONSTRATORS AND TWO LARGE POSTERS

OF ECEVIT HUNG FROM OLEYIS HOTEL RESTAURANT WORKERS'S UNION OFFICES OVERLOOKING TAKSIM SQUARE, DEMIREL SAID THAT THIS TYPICAL OF RPP'S CONCEPT OF FREEDOM FOR ITSELF BUT NOT FOR OTHERS. DESPITE OCCASIONAL SCUFFLES, RALLY ENDED WITHOUT SERIOUS INCIDENT.

5. DEMIREL REFERRED BRIEFLY TO THE OPIUM BAN, CRITICIZING RPP FOR PROCLAIMING ITSELF "OPIUM HERO" AND POINTING OUT THAT DESPITE "VARIOUS PRESSURES" ON HIM, NO BAN INSTITUTED UNTIL AFTER MARCH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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1971 COUP-BY-MEMORANDUM. HE ADDED THAT ANY GOVT. WHICH CAME TO POWER FOLLOWING MARTIAL LAW ERA WOULD HAVE LIFTED BAN.

6. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH MANY PARTICIPANTS APPEARED TO BE NO MORE THAN CURIOUS ONLOOKERS (INCLUDING FORMER RPP MIN. TOURISM ORHAN BIRGIT) TURNOUT WAS BETTER THAN THAT OF DEMIREL'S TAKSIM RALLY IN 1973 GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN. CROWD GREW RESTLESS FROM EXCESSIVE NUMBER OF SPEAKERS; NONETHELESS REPONSE WAS

GENERALLY GOOD TO DEMIREL'S REMARKS. GEN. TURUN, HOWEVER,
FAILED TO DRAW MUCH ENTHUSIASM FROM CROWD EXCEPT WHEN PRAISING
ATATURK AND TURKISH MILITARY. INTERESTING POINT WAS DISTINCTION
MADE BY TURUN, FEYZIOGLU AND DEMIREL BETWEEN "NEW" AND "OLD"
RPP, THE FORMER DESCRIBED AS HAVING ABANDONED ATATURK'S
PRINCIPLES IN CONTRAST TO THE ATATURK-INONU FOUNDATIONS OF THE LATTER

.
IN ADDITION TO THE JP'S HAVING GAINED OFFICIAL ENDORSEMENT FROM
BAYAR AND MENDERES AS THE EXTENSION OF THE OLD DP, THE JP APPEARS
TO BE TRYING TAKE MANTLE OF ATATURK AWAY FROM RPP.
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